

1 Cor. 3:10-11 -- ...*For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

Eph. 2:19-20 -- ...*built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.*

- Jesus stands over the nations, over every tribe and people, and he is calling his people to himself, **HE** is building his church.
- **Nothing will stop this from happening, not even the gates of hell!**

August 27, 2017

The Identity of Jesus

Matthew 16:1-20

Jesus' Identity Rejected (v. 1-4)

- Demand for another sign:

The Pharisees and Sadducees working together should stand out.

Both groups represented the Sanhedrin, the ruling Jewish council, but they came from very different theological positions.

- Pharisees: ultra-conservative, marked by self-righteousness
- Sadducees: liberal elite, marked by self-indulgence

- It is remarkable that people with such different outlooks and agendas can join together against the things of God.

Eph. 6:12 -- *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers...*

- The god of this world, Satan himself (2 Cor. 4:4), does not hesitate to rally his forces against God's work and God's children.
- The Pharisee's self-righteousness and the Sadducee's self-indulgence blinded them from seeing that God was bringing his Messiah into his kingdom.

- Bringing skeptical questions and ploys to Jesus to get him to perform is an eternity away from bringing our needs to him in acknowledgement of his rule over our lives.

Jesus' Identity Re-emphasized (v. 5-12)

- The disciples were focused on their temporal situation having again apparently missed the signs that the Lord of the Universe was sitting in their midst.
- Before we rush to criticize we need to see ourselves in the disciples.

Phil. 4:6 -- "... do not be anxious about anything..."

- Jesus warned that the attitude of the Pharisees and Sadducees can spread.
- Jesus repeatedly asks, "Do you still not understand? Are you still refusing to see who I am?"

Jesus' Identity Revealed (v. 13-20)

- Jesus had not lost his focus on his identity with the disciples; he started by asking about other folks, then zeroed in on their hearts.
- "But who do you say that I am?"

John 14:15 -- "If you love me, you will keep my commandments"

- Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- As soon as Peter might have begun to bask in the approval, Jesus cut the legs out from under any pride that could have been forming in his heart.
- The ability to see Jesus rightly comes from outside us, outside of natural flesh and blood ability; it comes completely by the grace of God.

1 Cor. 2:14 -- *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

John 6:44 -- *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."*

Eph. 2:8-9 -- *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

(v.18-20)

- There is absolutely nothing in Matthew chapter 16 verse 18 about any successors to Peter. Period.
- Peter played a foundational role in establishing the church, but there also can be no doubt that the spread of the gospel was/is the means by which Christ builds his church.